AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of the claims:

1 (Currently amended): A method for ~~the treatment of~~ protection of an excitable tissue in a mammal having a neurodegenerative condition, comprising administering peripherally to a mammal in need thereof an effective non-toxic amount of EPO for the protection of an excitable tissue.

2 (Currently amended): The method of Claim 1 wherein said ~~condition is the result of~~ mammal has a neurodegenerative disease.

3 (Original): The method of Claim 1 wherein said excitable tissue is central nervous system tissue or peripheral nervous system tissue.

4 (Original): The method of Claim 1 wherein said administration comprises oral, topical, intraluminal or by inhalation or parenteral administration.

5 (Original): The method of Claim 4 wherein said parenteral administration is intravenous, intraarterial, subcutaneous, intramuscular, intraperitoneal, submucosal or intradermal.

6 (Original): The method of Claim 1 wherein said administration is acute or chronic.

8 (Original): The method of Claim 1 wherein said EPO is administered at a dose greater than the dose necessary to maximally stimulate erythropoiesis.

9 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 1 wherein said EPO is a recombinant form thereof.

10 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 1, wherein the amount of EPO is administered prior to a medical or surgical procedure.

11 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 10, wherein the EPO is administered at least one time 4 hours to 24 hours prior to the medical or surgical procedure.

12 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 10, wherein the medical procedure is labor or childbirth.

13 (Previously presented): The method of Claim 10, wherein the surgical procedure is tumor resection, aneurysm repair, or a coronary artery bypass procedure.

14 (New): A method for treating or protecting against injury or damage to neural tissue in a mammal, comprising administering peripherally to a mammal in need thereof an effective non-toxic amount of EPO for the treatment or protection of the neural tissue.

15 (New): The method of Claim 14 wherein said mammal has a neurodegenerative disease.

16 (New): The method of Claim 14 wherein said neural tissue is central nervous system tissue or peripheral nervous system tissue.

17 (New): The method of Claim 14 wherein said administration comprises oral, topical, intraluminal or by inhalation or parenteral administration.

18 (New): The method of Claim 17 wherein said parenteral administration is intravenous, intraarterial, subcutaneous, intramuscular, intraperitoneal, submucosal or intradermal.

19 (New): The method of Claim 14 wherein said administration is acute or chronic.

20 (New): The method of Claim 14 wherein said EPO is administered at a dose greater than the dose necessary to maximally stimulate erythropoiesis.

21 (New): The method of Claim 14 wherein said EPO is a recombinant form thereof.

22 (New): The method of Claim 14, wherein the amount of EPO is administered prior to a medical or surgical procedure.

23 (New): The method of Claim 22, wherein the EPO is administered at least one time 4 hours to 24 hours prior to the medical or surgical procedure.

24 (New): The method of Claim 22, wherein the medical procedure is labor or childbirth.

25 (New): The method of Claim 22, wherein the surgical procedure is tumor resection, aneurysm repair, or a coronary artery bypass procedure.

26 (New): The method of Claim 15 wherein the neurodegenerative disease is Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, dementia, stroke, epilepsy, age-related loss of cognitive function, memory loss, cerebral palsy, brain or spinal cord trauma, AIDS dementia, age-related loss of cognitive function, memory loss, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, seizure disorder, retinal ischemia, aging, glaucoma, or neuronal loss.